

## The ABA Humanitarian Award: Introduction of the Presenter

H. S. Pennypacker  
University of Florida

Today, we honor three individuals who have succeeded in obtaining judicial recognition of the right *not* to be denied effective treatment for a debilitating behavioral disorder. Specifically, we honor the courageous and determined parents of one autistic child. We also honor their attorney who placed devotion to a basic principle of law above financial remuneration. Although their case ultimately prevailed within the judicial system, today's honorees were forced to endure, and continue to endure, insults and criticism from certain members of the public, the press, and even representatives of the "helping" professions. These circumstances are not unprecedented in the history of humanitarian achievement.

It is fitting that Ogden R. Lindsley was selected by the ABA Council to make the presentations of these awards: It is well known that Dr. Lindsley was the first person to demonstrate in a systematic fashion that the tactics of scientific behavior analysis, creatively applied, would immediately yield a humane technology of behavior. This demonstration was not, and is still not, warmly received by agencies and individuals whose survival depends on traditional views and practices with regard to the management of human behavior. So extreme was the initial reaction from official quarters to Ogden's own pioneering efforts that he was forced

to cash in his GI life insurance policy in order to purchase reinforcers for his backward schizophrenics at Metropolitan State Hospital. Eventually, however, the American Psychiatric Association recognized the value of his contribution and awarded him its Hoffheimer Prize for significant research.

The hallmarks of Ogden's research were his uncompromising emphasis on direct behavioral measurement (as opposed to psychometric inference) and his exhaustive analysis of the variables influencing the behavior of individuals. Ogden showed clearly that lawful, orderly relations could be obtained at the level of the individual and that these relations could form the basis of individualized treatment regimens. Today, we recognize the validity of his strategies in spite of nearly universal political rejection at the time of their initial promulgation. We are now able to appreciate those strategies because, like today's awardees, Ogden had the courage and the vision to adhere to the dictum that the laws of behavior, like the laws of this society, apply to individuals. In an increasingly just and humane society, which we all seek, both will be applied for the benefit of individuals. I am honored, therefore, to turn these proceedings over to my most distinguished colleague and my oldest friend, Ogden R. Lindsley.